

his wife, Beverly, who regularly go out and visit our wounded troops, and I went out to the Walter Reed Army Hospital. I had the opportunity to see a number of these courageous men who have sacrificed and have been wounded. And I couldn't help but think of it, as I came back and went to the Rules Committee last night and saw this attempt being made, which they have done, to tie the Labor, Health and Human Services appropriations bill to the Veterans bill, as nothing but pure politics which undermine the ability for us to get what these brave men and women who have fought on behalf of the cause of freedom need.

This is wrong. We have got to end it right now. Bring a clean bill to this floor.

#### SAY "THANK YOU" TO OUR VETERANS BY ADOPTING A STAND-ALONE VETERANS FUNDING BILL

(Mr. GOODE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOODE. Madam Speaker, I rise to thank the men and women in the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard for serving our Nation in Iraq and Afghanistan and around the world. They are honorably and bravely fighting terrorists overseas in order to protect American families at home.

One way we can say "thank you" to these brave men and women is to adopt a Veterans appropriations bill, stand-alone, with a unanimous or near unanimous vote. It does not need to be wrapped up into something else. We need to send a loud and clear "thank you" to our veterans in a veterans-only bill. Let's do it. Let's vote it up and say a great "thank you" before Veterans Day to our veterans.

#### HOLDING VETERANS FUNDING HOSTAGE CREATES A DANGEROUS PRECEDENT

(Mr. BLUNT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLUNT. Madam Speaker, the House passed the Military Construction-Veterans bill on June 15, over 140 days ago. The Senate passed a bill on September 6, sent it over to the House, and immediately appointed conferees.

The minority appointed their conferees. But up to now, we have never had conferees appointed on this bill, which means this bill that the President has announced he would sign could have become law before October 1. It means that military families, veterans, and retirees could be receiving the benefits of up to \$18.5 million every single day since October 1.

This tactic of holding veterans funding hostage creates a dangerous precedent. What controversial, unrelated policies could go on this bill in the future?

Madam Speaker, let's stop this practice today before it starts.

#### STOP THE POLITICAL GAMES; PROVIDE FUNDING FOR OUR TROOPS AND OUR VETERANS

(Mr. MICA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MICA. Madam Speaker and my colleagues, this is the first time I have come out for a 1-minute address, and I think it is necessary that I also voice my disapproval with what is happening.

Right now the Congress of the United States is at an 11 percent approval rating. And, unfortunately, the actions dealing with our veterans and military appropriations measures is going to, I think, further erode public confidence in this body.

Right now in what is going to play out in the next number of hours, our military and our veterans, unfortunately, will be held hostage. Unfortunately, too, our veterans and our military are going to suffer from this, all in an attempt to try to, I guess, embarrass the President of the United States. But in turn we will be embarrassing, and further eroding confidence in, this House.

We need to work together to pass in a bipartisan effort the funding for our troops and our veterans and stop the political games.

#### EARMARKS IN THE LABOR-HHS-VETERANS FUNDING APPROPRIATIONS CONFERENCE REPORT

(Mr. FLAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, people may wonder why we are doing this, combining these two bills, the Veterans bill and also Labor-HHS. It is easy to see when you look at it.

There are some 150 pages of earmarks in this conference report, including nine air-dropped earmarks. Now, these are earmarks that weren't considered by either the House or the Senate. They were simply air-dropped into the bill that we have no opportunity to amend out. We have violated our own rules. We are violating our own rules to do this: \$1 million for the Thomas Daschle Center for Public Service and Representative Democracy. We are spending \$1 million in this bill, air-dropped into the bill, with no opportunity to amend it out, a center for public service and representative democracy at a university somewhere named for a former Member of Congress.

This simply isn't right. This isn't right. We shouldn't be doing this. This institution deserves far better than we are giving it.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

#### EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT BASIC PAY FOR MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES SHOULD BE INCREASED

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 162) expressing the sense of Congress that Congress and the President should increase basic pay for members of the Armed Forces, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

#### H. CON. RES. 162

Whereas the United States continues to rely extensively upon the members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard who are deployed overseas and stationed at military support installations within the United States;

Whereas members of the Armed Forces, regardless of branch of service or whether serving in an active or a reserve component, have carried out their mission objectives with valor, distinction, and steadfast dedication to the cause of liberty and democracy;

Whereas more than 1,600,000 members of the Armed Forces have deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, and many of these members have served multiple deployments;

Whereas there are more than 3,000,000 family members and other dependents of the members of the Armed Forces serving on active duty and in reserve components;

Whereas nearly 50 percent of the members of the Armed Forces, who are deployed away from their permanent duty stations, have left families with children behind;

Whereas over 50 percent of the members of the Armed Forces who are currently deployed in Iraq are married;

Whereas military families have persevered in the face of challenges and continue to provide critically important comfort and care and numerous other contributions to their loved ones deployed overseas or stationed within the United States;

Whereas there currently is a 4 percent gap between the pay increases provided to members of the Armed Forces and the pay increases provided to private sector employees; and

Whereas it is in the national interest of the United States to offer to the members of the Armed Forces comparable pay to that which the civilian sector provides in order to retain highly qualified men and women in uniform and to faithfully reward their valiant service to the United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring).* That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) Congress and the President should increase basic pay for members of all components of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine